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AB 550 Testimony
Assembly Veterans and Military Affairs Committee
March 1st, 2012

Thank you Chairman Spanbauer and members of the committee for hearing this important legislation that gives peace of mind to our activated reservists and guardsmen and their families.

This issue was first pointed out to me by a constituent who is a member of the reserves and has been activated several times over the last 8 years. Under current law, before and after the passage of Act 10, a state/local employee who was called to active duty would have their health care premium paid for by their employer. Nothing was in statutes regarding payment of the pension contribution. Currently, WRS participants who are activated would have to pay their required pension contributions after returning from active duty. This is a burden that should not be placed on the men and women, and their families, who volunteer to serve our country. Many employers have budgeted to pay these contributions, but current law does not allow them to do so.

This bill requires employers to pay WRS employee required contributions for those who serve on active duty for a period of more than 30 days and does not include training time. It also allows the employer to recoup those contributions over a period of time after the employee returns from active duty if they so choose. The maximum allowable re-payment is 5% of a paycheck, but may be more if both the employer and employee agree on a faster timeline.

This bill was drafted with consultation from ETF, and will have no fiscal effect on the trust fund.

I thank you for hearing this bill, and would be happy to answer any questions you may have.